

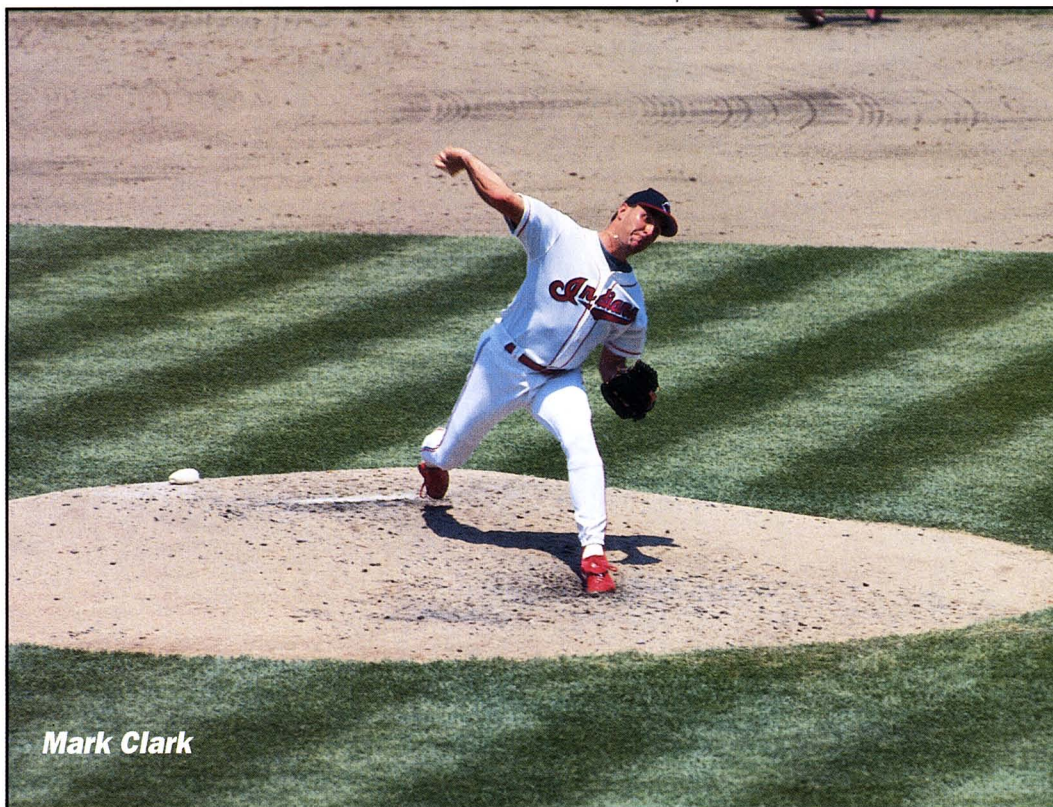
GAME FACE

INDIANS SCOR MAGAZINE



MARK CLARK:
SWEET SUCCESS

Indians



Mark Clark

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FEATURES

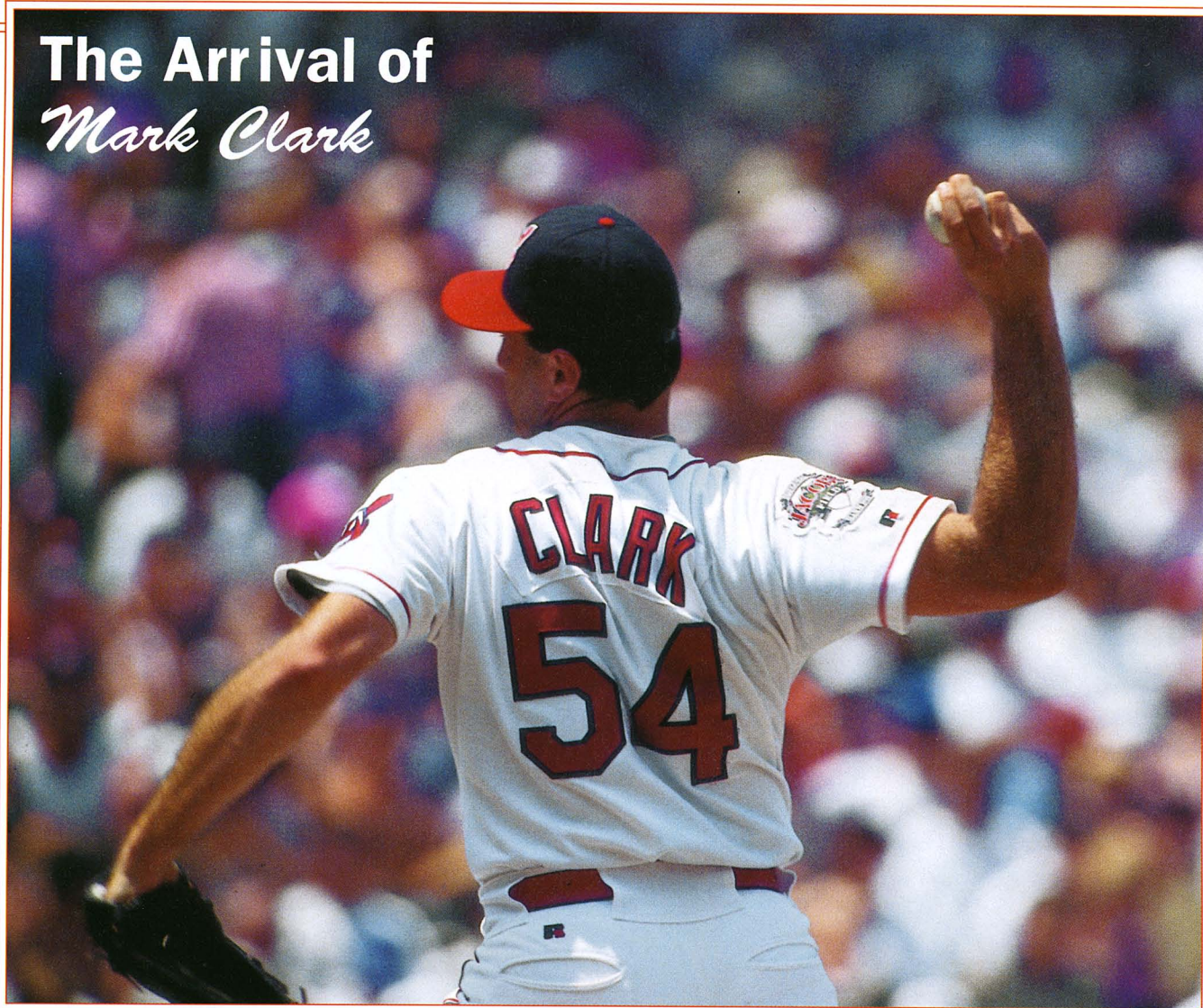
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Mark Clark may have come to this club under some tense circumstances, but now there is nowhere he'd rather be—and fans agree!
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This season marks the 125th anniversary of baseball, highlighted here in the fourth segment of a six-part series on MLB's milestone.
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While Charlie has been on the mound, Jackie Nagy has been "swimming with the fins" in Koukoura, New Zealand.

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The Arrival of *Mark Clark*



© Gregory Drezdton, both photos

by John Maroon

What a difference a year makes! On March 31, 1993 the Indians acquired Mark Clark from the St. Louis Cardinals for outfielder Mark Whiten. The primary reason that the Indians made the deal was because, after the tragic boating accident that claimed the lives of Indians pitchers Steve Olin and Tim Crews and essentially ended the career of Bob Ojeda, Cleveland was in dire need of pitching.

Mark came to the Indians under the most undesirable of conditions. The Indians not only lost pitchers in the accident, they lost family. And now Mark Clark was asked to come in and fill these shoes.

"That was a very strange time for me. I didn't know anyone on the team and

didn't know Steve (Olin) or Tim (Crews) but here I was. I remember walking onto the bus as we were breaking camp and nobody said a word to me. It was really awkward, but I tried to understand their

feelings," explained Clark.

Amy, Mark's wife, agreed. "Mark and I left a lot of friends in St. Louis and it was a strained time for us. Mark came home from spring training and said, 'Amy, no one talked to me all the way home and I don't know what to say to them.'"

In addition, Mark was a lifelong Cardinals fan and was fulfilling a dream. He also never followed the American League and didn't know any of his new teammates or any of the opposing hitters.

Since that time, however, the Clarks have an entirely different outlook on the



trade. Mark explains, "It (coming to Cleveland) turned out to be the best thing that could have happened for me. I didn't know if I was going to get a chance to pitch in St. Louis, but I knew I would get an opportunity over here and it's worked out great!"

The Indians ended up getting off to a very slow start in '93, as did Clark. In his first 15 appearances, only four as a starter, he was 1-2 and had an ERA over 6.00. On June 1, he was optioned to AAA Charlotte for a brief stay.

While all of this was happening, Mark Whiten, the man the Indians traded for Clark, was putting together a solid season for the Cards, and the Indians and Clark were constantly reminded of this. "I really never heard much about it until he hit those four homers in a game," said Mark. "I never let that stuff bother me. I needed to have a strong September last year and prove to people that I could pitch here and I did that. I've always believed in myself."

After being recalled from the minors, he suffered a pulled muscle in his upper back and was placed on the disabled list from July 18 to September 9. During his recovery, he worked with Tribe coaches on a change in his delivery.

When Mark was first drafted by the Cardinals, he had the same windup that he has now with his arms up over his head. While working his way through the St. Louis farm system, an instructor suggested that he keep his hands chest high during his windup rather than bring them over his head. Mark obliged and, until last September, remained that way.

"We were in Boston in August and (former pitching coach) Rick Adair asked me 'Clarkie, have you ever thought about bringing your hands up over your head?' I said, 'No' and he said 'Let's try it.'"

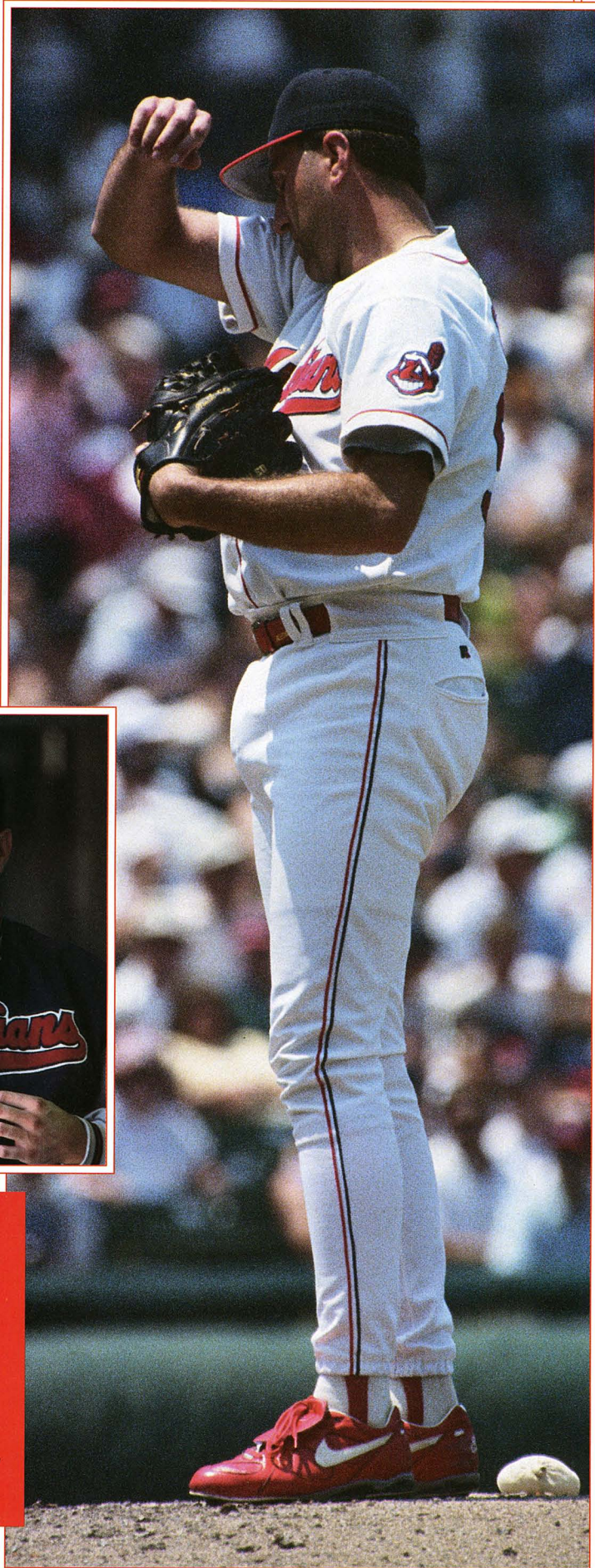
"As soon as I started doing it, I couldn't believe the difference, the pressure it took off my arm and the way my pitches all came together at that point."

Isn't that the truth! Since coming off the disabled list, including last September, and



"Coming to Cleveland turned out to be the best thing that could have happened for me. I didn't know if I would get a chance to pitch in St. Louis, but I knew I would get an opportunity here and it's worked out great!"
—Mark Clark

© Gregory Drezdson, both photos



altering his delivery, Mark is 11-3 with an ERA of just over 3.00.

The Indians believed that his strong September and solid spring were no flukes. Mark was signed to a two-year contract by the Indians near the end of spring

training. The deal also includes club options for the 1996 and '97 seasons.

At the time of the contract signing Mark said, "If I go out and win 15 or 16 games this year, some people might say you could make more in arbitration, but I don't look at it like that. I like this team and I like the security. I want to stay here because I think we are going places."

If you didn't know any better, you would think that Clark was a part-time psychic.

Since The Great Clark Turnaround, thoughts around Jacobs Field have turned toward an All-Star appearance for the 26-year-old righthander. In fact, the Indians went so far as to mail Clark candy bars to AL managers and the national media!

But going to Pittsburgh for the Mid-Summer Classic on July 12 was not what Clark was thinking



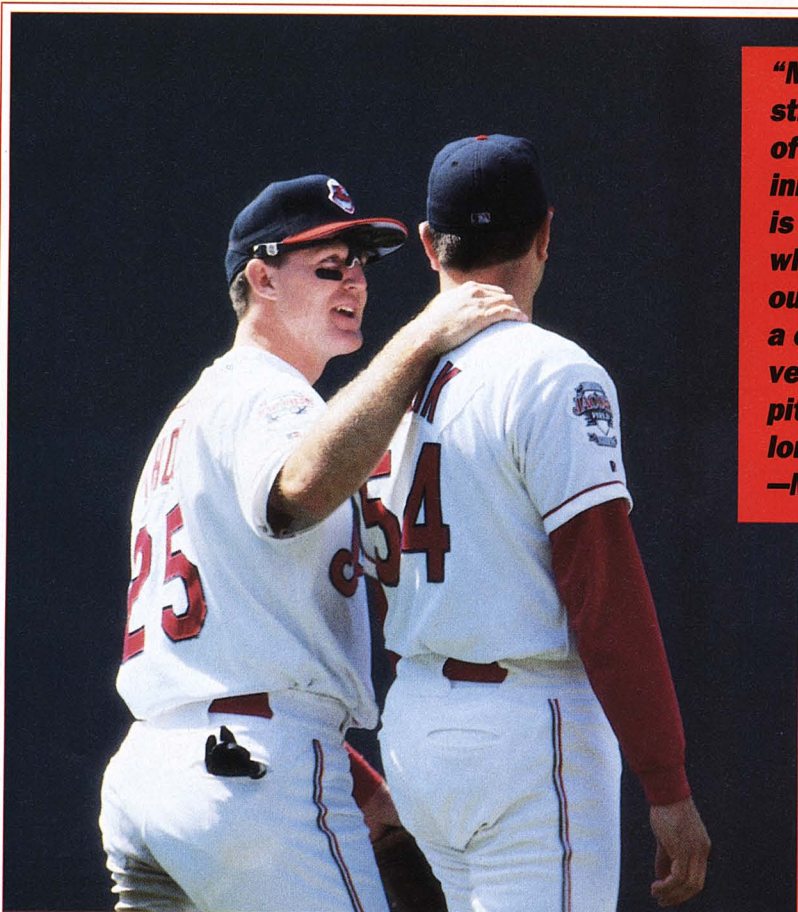
about at the time. "I don't want to have that on my mind then go out there and lose. I just want to go out there and continue throwing like I have been and whatever happens, happens."

Besides, Clark would like to pitch

strictly at Jacobs Field if at all possible. At home he is 5-1 with three complete games. "It's a beautiful park and the fans really get into it. It gives you a boost. Other than that, I really can't explain my luck at home."

Tribe skipper Mike Hargrove doesn't think luck has anything to do with it. Mark is big and strong and capable of throwing a lot of innings for us. He is a smart pitcher who gets the big outs and has a chance to be a very successful pitcher for a very long time.

Mark's success thus far in '94 has been fun for



"Mark is big and strong and capable of throwing a lot of innings for us. He is a smart pitcher who gets the big outs for us and has a chance to be a very successful pitcher for a very long time."

—Mike Hargrove

Mark and Jim Thome live about an hour away from each other and go hunting often during the off-season.

fellow Illinois native and Mark's best friend on the team, third baseman Jim Thome. "Mark is dedicated to his job and it is really paying off. I think he is one of the hottest pitchers in baseball and it's good to see a buddy doing well. It's extra special for me because he's from near where I live."

Thome is from Peoria, IL about an hour drive from Bath, IL where Mark was born, raised and still lives today. During the off-season they frequently get together to hunt. "I've been hunting since I was a kid," says Clark. "My dad was a guide at a few hunting clubs and he took me with him. Jimmy's grandparents own a farm and we go deer hunting up there."

Mark attended Balyki High School where he played baseball and basketball. In fact, he earned All-City and All-State honors as a basketball standout. "I thought seriously about basketball until I went to college where I realized that I should turn my attention toward baseball and it seems like that was the right decision."

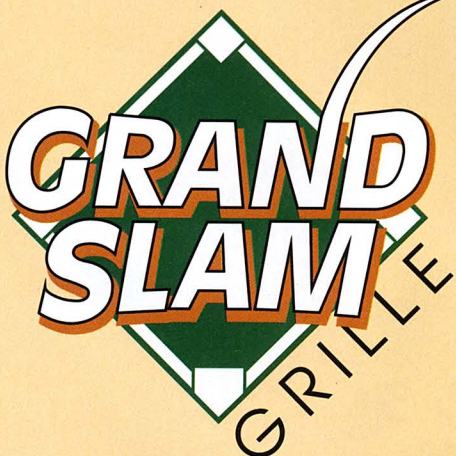
Indians fans agree, Mark.

Answers from Kids Corner, page 14:

Super Scramble: strike, bubble, needle, hidden, broken, castle. A ballplayer is like a sailor when he's **ON DECK**.

Word Fun: witch, watch patch, latch, match, hatch, hutch, hunch, lunch.

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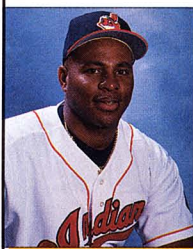
Ruben Amaro

B: Switch

T: Right

Born: 2/12/65

Resides: Philadelphia, PA



8

Albert Belle

B: Right

T: Right

Born: 8/25/66

Resides: Euclid, OH



35

Wayne Kirby

B: Left

T: Right

Born: 1/22/64

Resides: Yorktown, VA



7

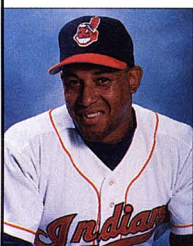
Kenny Lofton

B: Left

T: Left

Born: 5/31/67

Resides: Tucson, AZ



22

Candy Maldonado

B: Right

T: Right

Born: 9/5/60

Resides: Arecibo, PR



24

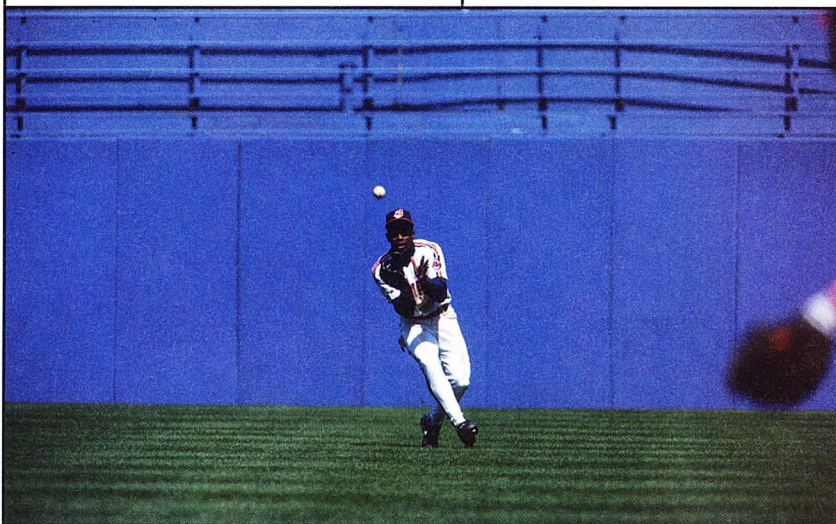
Manny Ramirez

B: Right

T: Right

Born: 5/30/72

Resides: Brooklyn, NY



Credit: Gregory Drezdson



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Sandy Alomar

B: Right

T: Right

Born: 6/18/66

Resides: Westlake, OH



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Tony Pena

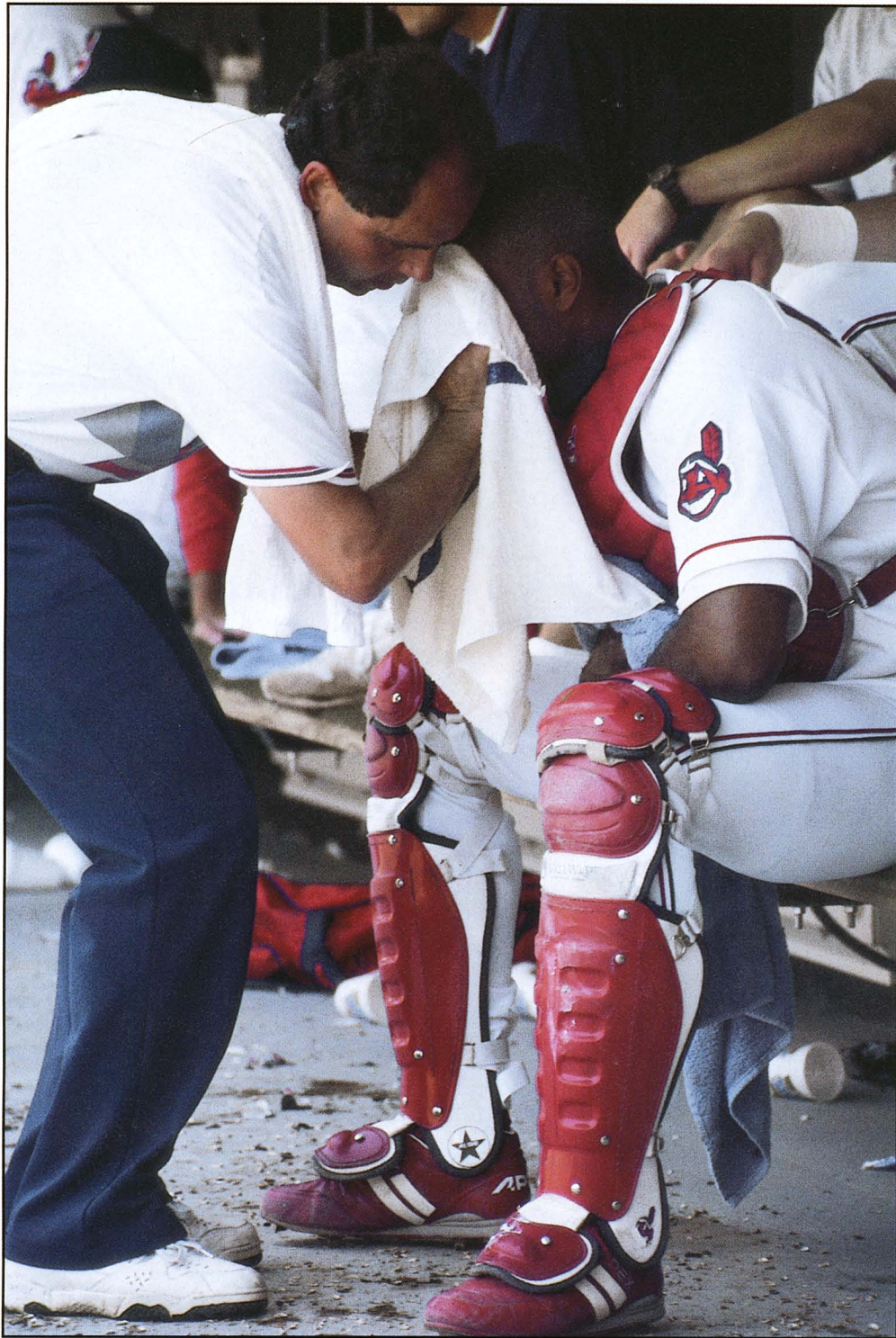
B: Right

T: Right

Born: 6/4/57

Resides: Santiago, DR

Indians



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**“Hey, are you crying?
There’s no crying in baseball!”**